

01978

1968/02/11



UNCLASSIFIED

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301DECLASSIFIED
E.O. 12958, Sec. 3.6By NR/117 Date 4/18/96CM-3001-68
11 February 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Situation in Vietnam

You have received General Westmoreland's seventh report on the situation in the Khe Sanh area for the period through 11:00 PM EST, 10 February 1968. I talked to General Westmoreland at 8:15 AM EST this morning and obtained the information on the situation in Vietnam which is contained in the succeeding paragraphs.

As General Westmoreland's report indicated, Khe Sanh airfield was shelled yesterday. A C-130 aircraft was hit by fragments of a mortar shell upon landing, damaging its hydraulic system; they may be able to repair this aircraft tomorrow. General Westmoreland plans to use C-123 and Caribou aircraft in resupplying Khe Sanh and, to meet this need, has had General Momyer convert for airlift use some C-123s used in the defoliation effort.

Sniper fire continued in Hue. The first of the three Vietnamese Marine Battalions to reinforce in Hue arrived there yesterday; in addition, elements of a US Marine Battalion were moved in. There was heavy fighting south of Danang, resulting in 195 enemy killed. There was light contact on the outskirts of Dalat.

The attack on Tan Son Nhut did materialize as General Westmoreland expected, resulting in 196 enemy killed and 170 or so weapons captured.

In the IV Corps area there was light contact in several towns.

A rallier (defector) taken at Khe Sanh gave information on the following order of enemy attack: (1) Lang Vei; (2) Con Thien; (3) Khe Sanh. He stated also that he had seen near Thanh Hoa several weeks

UNCLASSIFIED

REGRADED

DATE 13 Jul 95

AUTHORITY JOINT STAFF

TOP SECRET

27 of 104 copies

UNCLASSIFIED

000000-104

~~TOP SECRET~~

go about 20 missiles mounted on PT-76 Amphibious Tank chassis (the PT-76 was used at Lang Vei). General Westmoreland indicated these could be FROG missiles (see attachment) and that this could be the "big surprise" which the Soviet correspondent in Hanoi wrote about recently. Other possibilities for the "big surprise", in General Westmoreland's view, could be the use of SA-2 missiles near the DMZ, air strikes in the DMZ area by IL-28s, and MIG attacks against B-52s. General Westmoreland and his commanders are alert to all of these possibilities and taking appropriate measures.

In addition, General Westmoreland provided me the following assessment of South Korean and Australian troops in Vietnam:

"South Korean and Australian forces have aggressively and professionally fought the enemy wherever and whenever encountered. In addition to providing very capable defense of their own tactical areas of responsibility (TAOR) the presence of these allies has provided us the flexibility for redeployment of our own more mobile forces to contend with other threat areas. It is also significant that Highway 1 has remained open through the length of the Korean TAOR during the current situation. The fact that the more dramatic events of well coordinated enemy attacks have bypassed Korean and Australian areas is attributable to an extent to the emphasis of enemy strategy."

Earle G. Wheeler

EARLE G. WHEELER

Chairman

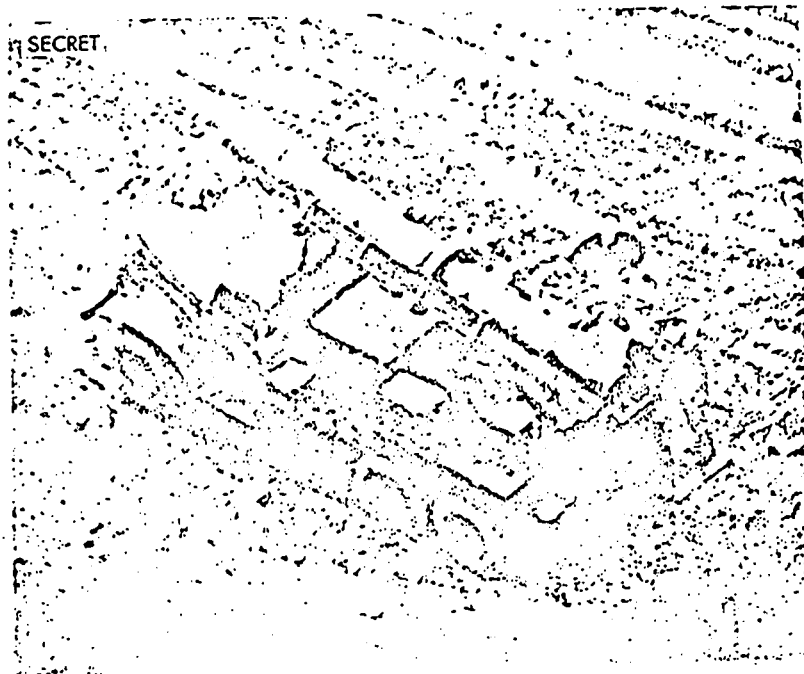
Joint Chiefs of Staff

Attachments

FROG Missile

PT-76 Amphibious Tank

~~TOP SECRET~~



FREE ROCKET OVER GROUND (FROG-6)

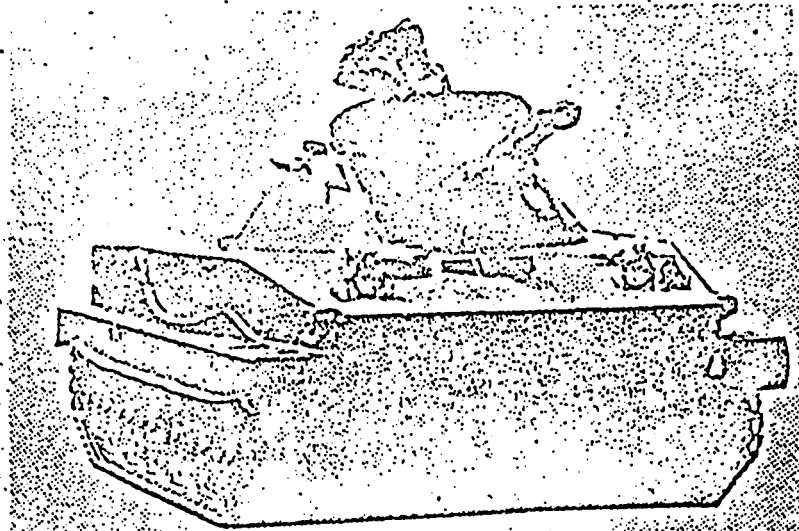
The first sighting of the FROG-6 was with Soviet troops in East Germany on 17 February 1965. FROG-6 is the first Soviet departure from track-mounted, single-launch rocket systems. Although similar in appearance to the FROG-3, the rocket and launcher of FROG-6 are about one-half the size of those of FROG-3 and are mounted on the 2½-ton ZIL-157 truck. The small FROG-6 warhead section, which also resembles the larger FROG-3 warhead section, appears to be designed to carry a nuclear payload to approximately 85 per cent of the range of FROG-3. A training version of FROG-6 is currently employed with the East German Army. The possibility exists that all of the FROG-6 launchers sighted to date have been training systems and that the FROG-6 system is, in fact, a training device.

The rocket is fin- and spin-stabilized. The probable role of the FROG-6 launcher system, if, in fact, it is a valid system, is to provide short range, close nuclear fire support at divisional level.

The characteristics listed below are preliminary and are obtained from photographic scaling.

CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE

Vehicle:	ZIL-157 truck	
Weight, complete system (less crew)	8.7 short tons	7.9 mt
Speed	40 mph	64.3 km/h
Cruising range	400 miles	643 km
Launcher:		
Elevation	0° to +60°	
Firing quadrant limits	+8° to +50°	
Traverse	5° left; 5° right	
Rocket:		
Length	21.4 ft	6.5 m
Weight	1,940 lb	880 kg
Range - maximum (Nuc)(HE)	18.0 nm	31,000 m
- minimum (Nuc)(HE)	5.8 nm	10,000 m
Warhead		
Weight (Nuc)(HE)	400 lb	181.6 kg
Maximum diameter	21.04 in	535 mm
Accuracy (CEP)(at 2/3 max range)	438 yd	400 m
Propellant	Solid	
Reaction time	15-30 minutes from arrival at presurveyed site.	



PT-76 AMPHIBIOUS TANK

The PT-76, introduced in 1952, is the standard tactical reconnaissance tank of the Soviet and some Eastern European Communist armies. It has been supplied to Cuba and has also appeared in Laos. The chassis has proven to be rather versatile, being used for the BTR-50P armored personnel carrier and, in a non-amphibious mode, for the FROG-2, 3, 4, and 5 rocket launchers. Propulsion in the water is achieved by a hydrojet system with intake ports on both sides of the hull bottom and exhaust ports in the rear.

The PT-76 pictured above has the 76-mm gun D-56TM which was installed in the PT-76 after 1957. Earlier PT-76 tanks mount the 76-mm gun D-56T with a multibaffle muzzle brake. Performance figures for the two guns are the same.

Although classified by the Soviets as a tank, the PT-76 is very lightly armored (only 0.63 inch maximum) and mounts only a moderately effective 76-mm weapon which makes it undergunned by present standards. Essentially, the tank is a member of the Soviet light armored vehicle family, which includes armored personnel carriers (BTR-40, BTR-152), amphibious armored personnel carriers (BTR-50P, BTR-60P), and an amphibious armored reconnaissance vehicle (BRDM).

CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE

Vehicle:		
Weight	15.4 short tons	14 mt.
Length over-all (w/gun)	25.0 ft	7.6 m
Width	10.29 ft	3.14 m
Height	7.4 ft	2.2 m
Engine	237-hp @ 1,800 rpm, in-line 6 Diesel	
Crew	3	
Speed (land)	27.3 mph	44 km/h
Speed (water)	6.3 mph	10.1 km/h
Cruising range	149 miles (on main fuel tanks)	239.7 km
Maximum gradeability	38°	
Trench crossing ability	9.2 ft	2.8 m
Vertical obstacle ability	3.6 ft	1.09 m
Fording depth	Amphibious	
Infrared	Yes (on some models)	
Maximum armor (hull)	0.56 in (14 mm) @ 45°	
Maximum armor (turret)	0.63 in (16 mm) @ 33°	
Armament:		
Main	76-mm Tank Gun D-56T or (after 1957) D-56TM	
Muzzle velocity (AP-T) (BR-350B)	2,172 fps	663 m/s
(HVAP-T) (BR-354P)	3,167 fps	965 m/s
(HEAT) (BP-354)	1,065 fps	325 m/s
Armor penetration	550 yd (500 m)	1,100 yd (1,000 m)
0° obliquity (AP-T) (BR-350B)	2.7 in (69 mm)	2.40 in (61 mm)
(HVAP-T) (BR-354P)	3.6 in (92 mm)	2.3 in (58 mm)
(HEAT) (BP-354)	4.7 in (120 mm)	4.7 in (120 mm)
Secondary armament	One 7.62-mm SGMT machinegun (coaxial)	

1/ For PT-76 constructed after 1957.

2-38

~~SECRET~~

34203-106